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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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CATALOGING - PREP.



What is maple cream or maple butter? It is a fondant-type confection in a butterlike spread consistency. It's made of microscopic sugar crystals interspersed with a thin coating of saturated sirup, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Due to the tangy flavor of buttermilk it cannot successfully replace other forms of milk in recipes.

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If you add a teaspoon of lemon juice to the water when cooking cauliflower it will help to keep the cauliflower nice and white. Cauliflower will discolor if overcooked.

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If winter squash has a tender rind it is probably immature and will have poor eating quality. The rind should be hard if it's fully mature.

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Don't pass up Grade B poultry. It may be a good choice for chicken stews, casseroles and soups. And don't forget that a whole chicken is usually a better buy than chicken pieces.

* * *

Foods to watch for include freeze dried cottage cheese.

HOLD THAT VITAMIN C —

How much vitamin C (ascorbic acid) is there in a 4 oz. serving of fresh orange juice? About 60 milligrams of vitamin C (on a year-round average) according to U.S. Department of Agriculture figures. That's one-half the amount recommended on the Daily Dietary Allowances* designed for the maintenance of good nutrition of practically all healthy persons.

What is the retention of vitamin C in orange juice as related to the type of container in which it's stored? Does it make any difference if you buy frozen orange juice in a can that has a cardboard liner?

Chilled orange juice was originally packed in waxed cardboard containers. It was not sterile and the carton allowed penetration by air and oxygen; in some cases 25% of the ascorbic acid was lost in two or three weeks. This pointed up a need for additional research.

It may generally be concluded from USDA research that commercially used containers for frozen orange concentrates are entirely satisfactory as long as the product remains frozen. For "chilled" orange juice, glass bottles tested gave high ascorbic acid retention as long as the product remained cold. It is important to keep the product at the recommended degrees of coldness and to use it within a reasonable time. Various types of containers and temperatures are now being tested by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, Fruit and Vegetable Laboratory in Winter Haven, Florida.

*Food and Nutrition Board of the
National Research Council

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LOWER THE NOISE LEVEL

— nature's way.

Take away the blinder, remove your earmuffs and do something about it—if the city noises are getting you down, advises the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. Their answer is—plant trees, for trees are one of nature's best ways of making your environment more pleasant.

Trees will also effectively moderate wind and temperature and reduce any influence that these two factors might have on the transmission of sound. If the source of sound is made invisible, the sound will not seem so harsh to the ear. Trees can even be planted to screen or camouflage noisy neighbors—this will have an effect on unwanted sounds.

Experimental work on sound propagation by Forest Service Researchers shows that shrubs and trees—if used correctly—can play a major part in reducing noise. The answer is a big YES, they surely can.

ROBBIE ROBOT DOES IT AGAIN—

On the West Coast a giant picker--mechanized like a robot--puts clingstone peaches in the spotlight as the new crop to pick. Six to ten bins of about 1,000 pounds each may be harvested by the machine which usually takes three men to operate. The big harvesters, working in the California orchards, use the shake and catch principle to harvest the ripe fruit. Costs in using the harvesters will soon be evaluated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service in cooperation with the University of California. Another item to be considered is whether or not the shaker clamp will cause lasting damage to the tree trunk. Approximately 10 percent (by 1970) of the peaches were harvested by the mechanical method.

COST VS. CONVENIENCE

Does it really cost more money to purchase frozen french fries, mashed or au gratin potatoes? Wouldn't it save a lot of money for Mrs. Homemaker to spend an extra half hour or so to prepare their own, "from scratch?" Not necessarily — according to U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates (from Washington, D.C. prices in June 1971) show that small packages of dehydrated potatoes and frozen french fries cost about the same as home-prepared one. If you have a large family however, you can save money on the home-style ones. Here is a breakdown:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>Price per market unit</u>	<u>Servings per unit</u>	<u>Cost per 1/2 cup serving</u>	<u>Cost relative to cost of home- prepared product</u>
	<u>Cents</u>	<u>1/ Number</u>	<u>2/ Cents</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Au gratin potatoes</u>				
Home prepared; 1 lb. potatoes used-----	13	7.0	8.0	100
Dehydrated; 5.5 oz. package-----	49	4.6	11.2	140
<u>Mashed potatoes</u>				
Home prepared; 1 lb. potatoes used-----	13	4.1	3.8	100
Dehydrated:				
6.5 oz. package---	30	10.3	3.8	100
13 oz. package---	60	20.6	3.8	100
32 oz. package---	104	50.7	2.9	76
<u>French fried potatoes</u>				
Home prepared; 1 lb. potatoes used-----	13	3.8	6.4	100
Frozen:				
9 oz. package-----	19	3.2	5.8	91
32 oz. package-----	50	11.4	4.3	67

1/ number of 1/2 cup servings may differ slightly by brand

2/ includes cost of all ingredients required for preparation

DID YOU KNOW THAT . . .

USDA checks plant facilities and equipment, sanitation, slaughter and processing methods, containers and labeling.

PLENTIFUL HOLIDAY HELPERS

Look ahead—we're almost ready for seasons greetings and good cheer which abound at this time of year with food as the mainstay of most of the festivities. A big help to holiday menu planners will be the foods which the U.S. Department of Agriculture has listed as "plentiful" in December. They are: broiler-fryers; potatoes, instant mashed potatoes and frozen french fried potatoes; turkeys; pork; eggs; split peas; fresh pears; cranberries, cranberry sauce and cranberry juice cocktail; apples, applesauce and apple juice; and rice.



The 12 days of Christmas. . . a perfect time to please the family with "homey" dishes created from "Plentifuls." Try one a day—

1. Start with oven-bake chicken using a crushed pre-salted pretzel coating.
2. Scallop potatoes, using a canned condensed cream soup for part of the milk.
3. Instead of the usual deviled egg yolk mixture, "devil" eggs with chicken, turkey, or ham salad.
4. For the Christmas party buffet board—feature "build-your-own sandwiches" with cooked turkey or ham, Swiss cheese, lettuce, and rye bread.
5. Serve hot creamed ham and eggs in individually baked pastry shells with pimiento-poinsetts garnishes.
6. Use a dollop of sour cream to enhance the taste of split pea soup.
7. Dip sliced, fresh pears in lemon juice and serve with cheese and crackers.
8. For a cranberry upside-down cake, spread canned whole cranberry sauce over bottom of buttered cake pan, top with simple sponge or butter cake mix, bake as directed, and invert onto platter.
9. Top warm apple crisp with a scoop of ice cream.
10. Bake apples with a filling of jellied cranberry sauce.
11. Use cranberry nut bread loaves to make gifts in the best of taste.
12. Add flavor to rice au gratin with slivered toasted almonds.

COMMENTS & INQUIRIES TO:

Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Press Service, 461-A,
Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.
Or telephone (202) DU8-5898 or DU8-5881.